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LETTER DATED 7 MARCH 1994 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ALBANIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to inform you about the recent increase in the Serbian repression against the Albanian people in Kosova.

During the last two weeks, the Serbian authorities intensified their repression against the Albanian population in Kosova. In addition to the routine terror carried out through the brutal police expeditions undertaken under the pretext of arms search, the Serbian authorities took some other cruel measures aiming at finally destroying the Albanian cultural institutions.

By the end of February, the Serbian authorities ruling Kosova closed down the Academy of Sciences and Arts of Kosova and sequestrated the building. Despite the strong Albanian peaceful reaction, those authorities decided to close this high and fundamental Albanian scientific and cultural institution.

On 28 February 1994, the Serbian authorities ordered the closure of the Institute of Albanology (Institute for Albanian Studies) of Prishtina. That Institute has been the major research centre for the Albanian historical and ethnic heritage.

My country attaches great importance to the functioning of these two institutions for the protection and promotion of the Albanian heritage. The closure of the Academy of Science and Arts of Kosova and the actions to close the Institute of Albanology of Prishtina are a part of the overall Serbian terror against the Albanians in Kosova and a form of genocide against the Albanian culture.

Another innocent Albanian was killed by the Serbian military forces, thus showing clear evidence of the fierce and systematic violence which has increased the death toll among the Albanian victims of the Serbian rule over Kosova. Last Monday, the Serbian military shot dead Selman Pajazit Daci, at the Han of Elez, a village located in the border area between Kosova and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. No explanation was given by the military authorities. Such actions of fierce violence further aggravate the already increasing high tension prevailing in Kosova since 1989. This killing happens at a time when

big military movements of the Serbian army, including heavy artillery, are reportedly being observed in various districts of Kosova, especially near Prishtina, the capital of Kosova.

On 28 February, the Serbian police undertook two large punitive expeditions in the district of Skenderaj. Early in the morning, some 20 Serbian police raided the home of Ismet Veliqi, from Polac village. Mr. Veliqi, a former army officer, was then arrested. In Baks village (district of Skenderaj) a police unit of 30 Serbian police raided the home of Avdi Behrani, former police commander-in-chief of Skenderaj district, and, after a thorough search of his home, Mr. Behrani was arrested.

The police expeditions on "arms search" of the so-called "campaign for the collection of arms" have continued since December 1992. During these expeditions, hundreds of Albanian homes have been raided; some 3,400 Albanians have directly suffered police brutality, most of them brutally beaten and maltreated by the Serbian police, and many of them were imprisoned. In many cases the police have asked the family members to evacuate their homes and migrate out of Kosova or otherwise they are threatened with extermination.

The political persecution of the Albanian political and human rights activists reached its climax when, on 23 February, the Serb-run District Court in Prishtina finished another political trial of 19 Albanians accused of "hostile activity", and announced prison terms of from 1 to 10 years' imprisonment. The trial process lasted for a long time and suffered from serious procedural violations, including the use of torture against the defendants.

Since the expulsion of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) monitors from Kosova by the Serbian authorities, the situation has continuously deteriorated. The explosive situation in Kosova presents a serious threat of an outbreak of hostilities there, which could provoke a broad conflict in the Balkans. Therefore, I call the attention of the Security Council to investigate without delay the situation in Kosova. Likewise, I reiterate the calls of my Government to give consideration to the prevention of the conflict in Kosova, including immediate consideration of deployment of the United Nations troops there with a view to preventing a spillover of the conflict in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina to Kosova.

May I ask your kind assistance so that this letter is circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Pellumb KULLA
Ambassador
Permanent Representative